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HOME STERILIZATION

I.

DEAR EDITOR: Maybe the experience of one more in regard to home sterilization may help some one. I found the process of drying large articles of linen sterilized in a wash boiler very tedious and required most careful watching. For my own convenience, I purchased a portable "Rochester" sterilizer. The time and steps it saved me in the drying of linen alone more than compensated the cost. Any nurse who has much home sterilizing to do will find the portable sterilizer a great convenience and help, I am sure.

Illinois.

G. M. P.

II.

DEAR EDITOR: In reply to a request for a method of sterilization of goods in a private home, the following plan has proved a success with me. The number of sheets, towels, and dressings for the operation are wrapped in separate packs, each one labeled. Secure a clean wash boiler with a tight cover, arrange a towel or piece of cloth across the top, hammock fashion; this may be fastened to the boiler handles. Put in several packs, cover tight, and steam one hour over boiling water. Do not crowd in too many packs, as this prevents the circulation of steam, and the goods get very wet. After steaming, bake packs in an oven one hour, or until thoroughly dry. It will be necessary to watch them very closely, as cloth scorches so easily. Putting them in a partly covered dish and constant turning help. For a minor operation all necessary goods may be sterilized at one time.

Ohio.

C. L. R.

REGARDING CAPS AND UNIFORMS

DEAR EDITOR: So much has been said about caps and uniforms for nurses, I would like to ask whether graduate nurses are supposed to wear cap and uniform when on duty. If so, who should determine the style of each? What nurses are entitled to wear black bands? Is there any way to prevent practical nurses or nurses in training from wearing them? How could each school have its own uniform for its graduates? Is there any badge or uniform which a graduate nurse alone may wear?

Colorado.

E. J. M.

"A SERIOUS QUESTION" REPEATED

DEAR EDITOR: I read with great interest the following in the September JOURNAL:

"How may nurses who have graduated from hospitals which they found, too late, were not up to the standard, prepare themselves so that they may be eligible for state registration? I hope I am not asking too much and that some of your collaborators may be of some help to this class of nurses. B. W."

I have watched for an answer with that interest which only those can feel who are in the same dilemma. Seeing none in the following numbers, I have decided that it must be forgotten. I know I voice the sentiments of many others in asking you to give it space in the JOURNAL again.

California.

A GRADUATE SINCE 1905.

[In reply to the preceding letter we would say that it is impossible to give any hard and fast ruling in regard to a matter of this kind. The requirements of the law of each state would have to be considered separately, and the latitude allowed the board of examiners in determining such questions. We would suggest that a nurse finding herself deficient and wishing to prepare herself for registration should apply to the board of examiners of her own state, stating plainly where her training is lacking, and let such a board determine what further training she needs to take. It might be that she had graduated from a school giving no experience in the nursing of children or obstetrics, and that a postgraduate course would be all she would need. On the other hand, the conditions of the state law might be so rigid that only by taking a training all over again in a hospital of proper standards could she be made eligible. We are sure that many boards have had such questions referred to them, and we wish this writer might have the benefit of their experience through our pages which would also be helpful to others.—ED.]

#### BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT NEEDED

DEAR EDITOR: Do hospitals in general give their nurses enough training in hospital management? Is it just, either to them or to the hospital, to leave the nurses in entire ignorance of the enormous expense necessary to run a large hospital properly?

I have been a dietitian for the past ten years, and in that time have worked in several different hospitals. I come in personal contact with the nurses more than the other heads of departments do, the nurses have always talked to me freely, and in this way I have become acquainted with many ideas and opinions which they hold in common.

First of all, nurses in general are fault-finders. If they were running the hospital they could do it much better than the people who, through some mismanagement, have been put in charge. Of course they do not say this, but that is the idea conveyed. The food never suits them, either for themselves or the patients. If they kept these ideas to themselves they would do no particular harm, except as the habit of grumbling is always more or less harmful; but unfortunately they often talk to the patients in the same way, and sometimes to the doctor if he happens to be the kind of man who will listen to them.

Another curious idea they have is that all the money taken in from a patient should be put back into the care and feeding of that particular patient. Let me give you an example (one of many that have come under my personal observation).

A patient is paying twenty-five dollars a week for a room, and fifteen dollars a week for a special nurse (pupil nurse). This nurse seemed to have the idea that the patient was paying forty dollars a week for his room and board, and was racking her brain to think of special things to order for him, that he might have the worth of his money. She expressed her mind on the subject to me one day, which gave me the opportunity to correct a few wrong impressions. I asked her where she supposed the money came from to feed and house the nurses who care for the patients; to hire and feed the army of help required to keep a hospital in immaculate condition, so that patients would care to come into it; to buy and replace furniture, dishes, cooking utensils, expensive instruments, rubber goods; to keep the building in repair; and all